

**U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
Royal Gorge Field Office  
3028 E. Main Street  
Canon City, CO 81212**

## **CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION**

NUMBER: DOI-BLM-CO-F02-2014-0055 CX

CASEFILE/PROJECT NUMBER (optional):

PROJECT NAME: Fairplay Salvage

PLANNING UNIT: South Park Subregion # 4

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: T. 9 S., R.77 W., Section 33 and T. 10 S., R. 77 W., Section 4.

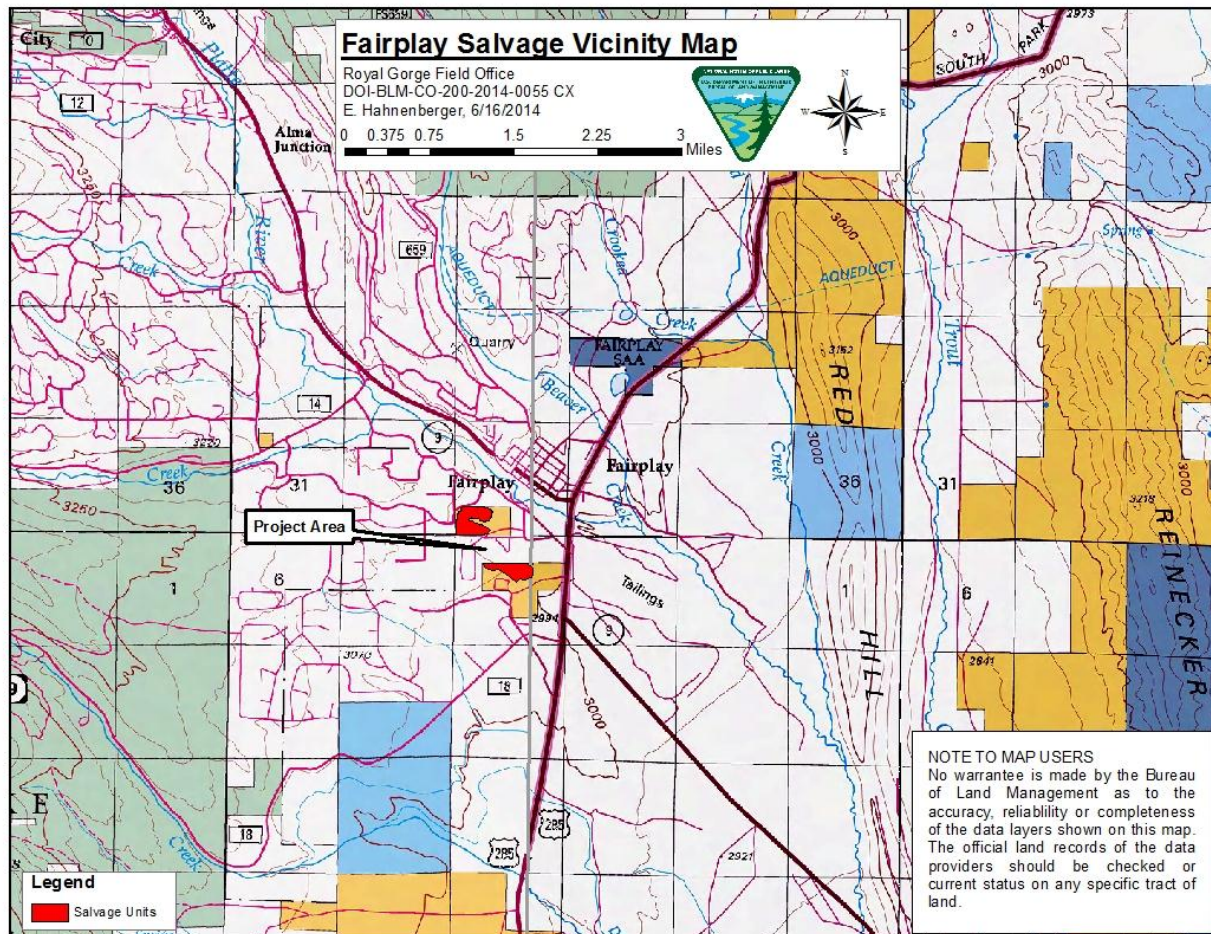
APPLICANT: BLM

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION:

In FY11, mountain pine beetles (MPB) had moved into the Fairplay region from the outbreak in Summit County. In response to this bark beetle outbreak the RGFO forestry program implemented the Fairplay Stewardship project to address bark beetles and tree mortality. Small active MPB spots and individual trees under attack were found within the project area. The Fairplay Stewardship project was an intermediate thinning treatment in a lodgepole pine and quaking aspen forest. The project was mechanically thinned from below and captured large trees under MPB attack during the spring of FY12. Post-treatment monitoring during FY 12 and FY13 revealed that very little blow-down had occurred with approximately 15 trees blown-over on the 70 acre project.

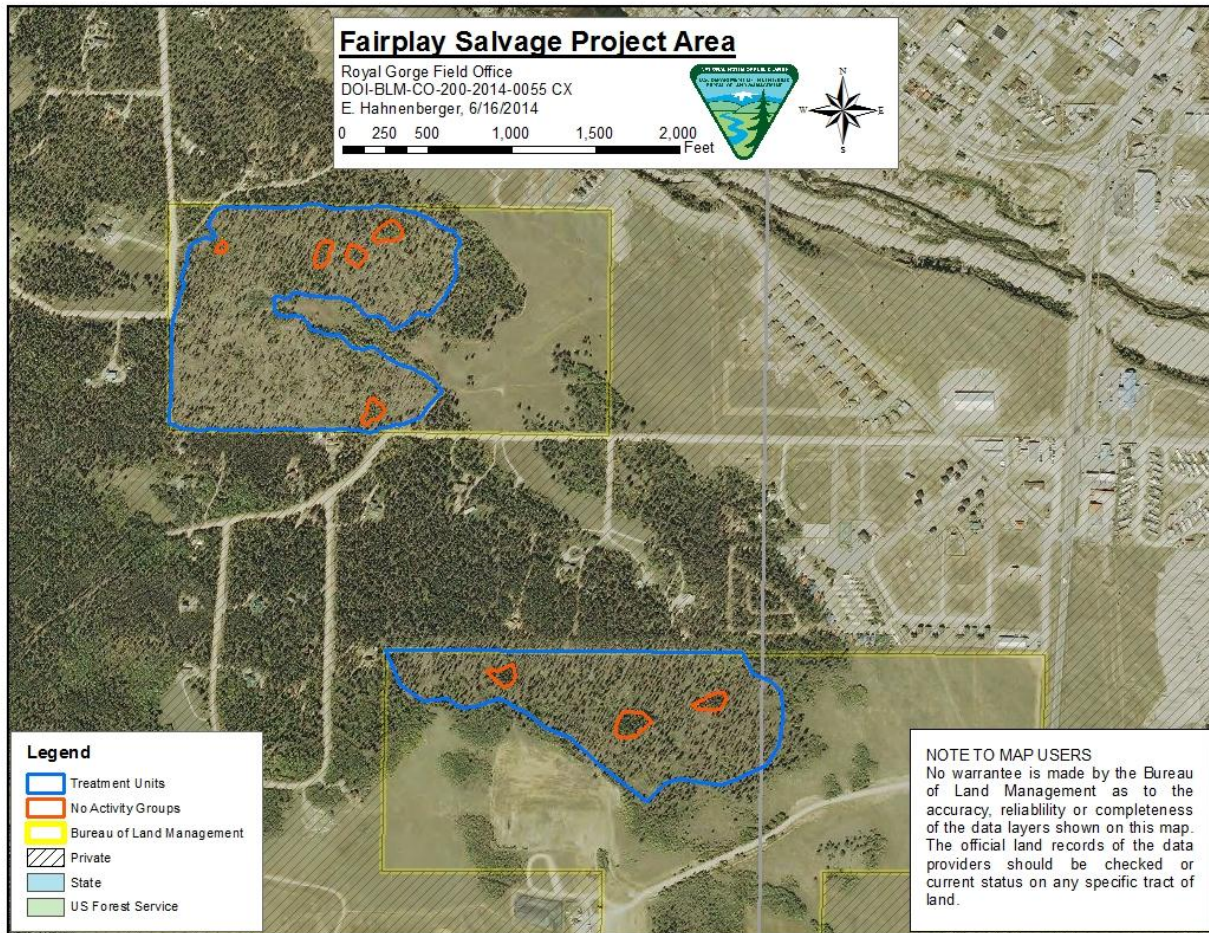
In June of FY14, the RGFO forester received a call from one of the adjacent landowners about substantial amount of blown-down on the BLM lands near Fairplay. The site was visited on 6/5/14 and approximately 20-30% of the large standing reserve trees had blown over.

The proposed action is to salvage trees blown over from extreme high winds in FY14, in the Fairplay Stewardship project. The tree salvage shall be completed through either a commercial timber sale or service contract. A service contract would require decking of the blown over timber which would be sold under a separate contract or open to public fuelwood gathering. Trees are likely to be salvaged by commercial firewood harvesters or loggers. The work is likely to be performed with chainsaws, skidders, small tractors, pickup trucks, trailers or small log hauling trucks on slopes less than 35%. Access points shall be monitored during and after unit completion to ensure that no new permanent roads are developed. Temporary roads will be reclaimed and closed as necessary.





## PROJECT MAP



PLAN CONFORMANCE REVIEW:

Name of Plan: Royal Gorge Resource Management Plan

Date Approved: 5/13/1996

Decision Number: C-4-1, 4-12, 4-13

Decision Language: Determine desired plant community in all disturbed sites.  
Vegetation will be managed to accomplish other BLM initiatives i. e., riparian, wildlife, etc..

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION REVIEW: This proposed action is listed as a Categorical Exclusion in DOI Departmental Manual Part 516 Chapter 11 9 (C8). None of the following exceptions in 516 DM 2, Appendix 2, apply.

Exclusion Criteria	YES	NO
1. Have significant impacts on public health or safety.		X
2. Have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation, or refuge lands; wilderness areas; lands with wilderness characteristics; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands; floodplains; national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas.		X
3. Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources.		X
4. Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.		X
5. Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.		X
6. Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.		X
7. Have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by either the bureau or office.		X
8. Have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species.		X
9. Violate a Federal law, or a State, local or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.		X
10. Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations.		X
11. Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites.		X
12. Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious		X

weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species.		
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<b>INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM REVIEW</b>			
<b>NAME</b>	<b>TITLE</b>	<b>AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>Initials/date</b>
Matt Rustand	Wildlife Biologist	Terrestrial Wildlife, T&E, Migratory Birds	6/17/14
Jeff Williams	Range Management Spec.	Range, Vegetation, Farmland	NA
Chris Cloninger	Range Management Spec.	Range, Vegetation, Farmland	NA
John Lamman	Range Management Spec.	Weeds	JL, 6/16/14
Dave Gilbert	Fisheries Biologist	Aquatic Wildlife, Riparian/Wetlands	DG, 6/16/14
Stephanie Carter	Geologist	Minerals, Paleontology, Waste Hazardous or Solid	SC, 6/16/14
Melissa Smeins	Geologist	Minerals, Paleontology	MS, 6/16/14
John Smeins	Hydrologist	Hydrology, Water Quality/Rights, Soils	JS, 6/16/14
Ty Webb	Fire Management Officer	Air Quality	TW, 6/16/14
Jeff Covington	Cadastral Surveyor	Cadastral Survey	6/17/14
Kalem Lenard	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Recreation, Wilderness, LWCs, Visual, ACEC, W&S Rivers,	KL, 6/16/14
John Nahomenuk	River Manager	Recreation, Wilderness, LWCs, Visual, ACEC, W&S Rivers	NA
Ken Reed	Forester	Forestry	6/16/14
Monica Weimer	Archaeologist	Cultural, Native American	NA
Michael Troyer	Archaeologist	Cultural, Native American	6/16/14
Greg Valladares	Realty Specialist	Realty	6/16/14
Steve Cunningham	Law Enforcement Ranger	Law Enforcement	NA
Ty Webb	Fire Management Officer	Fire	TW, 6/16/14

#### REMARKS:

Cultural Resources: Although cultural resources were found near the area of potential effect (5PA4497, 5PA4758, 5PA 4759.2, 5PA4759.3, 5PA4760 and 5PA4761; see report CR-RG-14-120 P), no sites determined to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) were found. Therefore, the proposed project will have no impact on any historic properties (those eligible for the NRHP).

Native American Religious Concerns: No possible traditional cultural properties were located during the cultural resources inventory (see above). There is no other known evidence that suggests the project area holds special significance for Native Americans.

Threatened and Endangered Species: There are no records of any federally listed or BLM sensitive species within or near the project area. The Proposed Action will not result in impacts to TES species.

Migratory Birds: In order to be in compliance with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and BLM policy, BLM must avoid actions, where possible, that result in a “take” of migratory birds. Generally this is a seasonal restriction that requires disturbance of vegetation used by nesting migratory birds (i.e. snags, green trees and shrubs, prairie) be avoided from May 15 through July 15. This is the breeding and brood rearing season for most Colorado migratory birds. If trees are felled prior to the nesting restriction, a contractor will be allowed to merchandize (limb, buck, skid and load) the felled trees during the seasonal restriction; however, any action that results in a measurable impact to a species’ population will not be allowed.

Wastes, Hazardous or Solid: If the project involves oil or fuel usage, transfer or storage, an adequate spill kit and shovels are required to be onsite during project implementation. The project proponent will be responsible for adhering to all applicable local, State and Federal regulations in the event of a spill, which includes following the proper notification procedures in BLM’s Spill Contingency Plan.

Wilderness: The parcels affected by the project were inventoried for wilderness characteristics in 2013. They were found to not possess wilderness characteristics therefore there will be no impacts to this resource.

#### COMPLIANCE PLAN (optional):

- 1) All wildlife snags with existing cavities or any evidence of use will be left for snag dependent species.
- 2) Off-road travel and work would cease if 1 inch or more of liquid precipitation occurs over a 5-day period, or if 0.25 inch or more of liquid precipitation occurs during one day. Work would only resume when soils have frozen or dried below the plastic limit sufficiently to avoid creating ruts deeper than 2 inches, excessive vehicle tracking and compaction, or when approval is obtained from the BLM.
- 3) Use existing roads unless other options will produce less long-term sediment.
- 4) Maintain and protect all existing improvements that are within the treatment area. Repair any improvements that are damaged by this activity.
- 5) Inventory, treat, and monitor noxious weed infestations throughout the treatment area.
- 6) There shall be no cutting of standing green trees or disturbance of understory vegetation from May 15 through July 15 to protect migratory bird nesting habitat. However, a contractor will be allowed to merchandize (limb, buck, skid and load) trees felled prior to May 15 and/or transport

decked timber from the project area during the seasonal restriction. Any action that results in a measurable impact to a migratory bird species' population will not be allowed.

NAME OF PREPARER: Ken Reed

SUPERVISORY REVIEW: Melissa K.S. Garcia

NAME OF ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATOR: /s/ Martin Weimer

DATE: 6/23/14

DECISION AND RATIONALE: I have reviewed this Categorical Exclusion and have decided to implement the Proposed Action.

This action is listed in the Department Manual as an action that may be categorically excluded. I have evaluated the action relative to the 10 criteria listed above and have determined that it does not represent an exception and is, therefore, categorically excluded from further environmental analysis.

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL:

/s/ Keith E. Berger  
Keith E. Berger, Field Manager

DATE SIGNED: 6/27/14